

SPEECH OF HON. ROBERT C. WINTHROP,

OF MASSACHUSETTS,

At New London, Conn., October 18th, 1864.

The largest political meeting ever held in New London, was convened in that city on Tuesday evening, October 18th, to listen to an address from the Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, of Massachusetts.

Mr. WINTHROP was greeted with applause, as he rose on the platform, and proceeded to speak as follows:

MR. WINTHROP'S SPEECH.

I am most deeply sensible, fellow-citizens, of the kindness and compliment of this reception. I thank you all most heartily for this inspiring welcome to your city. I am here at your request, or at the request of a committee of your citizens, to address you upon the great subject which is uppermost at this hour in all our minds and in all our hearts. I am here for no purpose of declamation or display. I am here to appeal to no prejudices and no passions. No arts of rhetoric are suited to the exigencies of this hour, and even if I were capable of resorting to them, I would abandon them all to-night. I am here under the deepest sense of the duties which rest upon each one of us to contribute what we may by word or deed for the relief of a bleeding and suffering country. Compelled by engagements, and I may add by my own condition of health, to refuse a hundred other invitations, I have been unable to resist this appeal from New London. And if there be any word of mine which may be worthy of being regarded, or listened to, or read in Connecticut, or anywhere else under the sun, there is no place from which it may more fairly go forth than from this old and honored home of my fathers. (Applause.) It is a time, I am sensible, deeply sensible, when the best and purest, and wisest, and most patriotic men throughout the country may differ, and do differ, widely from each other. I am here to cast no reproaches upon my opponents. I cannot altogether forget the reproaches which have been cast upon myself from some quarters, but I have no heart for bandying personalities at a period of our country's history so important as this. I pass by all such matters, or rather, let me say, they pass by me as the idle wind. The air is full of them. Arbitrary and arrogant assumptions of superior patriotism, coarse misrepresentations and perversions, opprobrious, insulting, names and epithets, coming often from the lips of those who might well be conscious that there is nobody who deserves them so much as themselves—we meet them at every turn. They come swarming up from the stump, and rostrum, and platform, and press. But, my friends, let us not resent them; let us not resent them. Let no man by any means be tempted to any acts of vengeance or violence. Let us simply overwhelm them with our contempt, and pass on unawakened and unimpaired to the declaration

of our honest opinions, and the assertion and exercise of our undisputed rights as freemen. (Applause.) Let us imitate, my friends, the example of our noble candidate for the Presidency, whose quiet endurance of injustice and calumny has been among the most beautiful illustrations of his character, and has won for him a respect which will outlive all the ephemeral notoriety of his revilers. Our country calls upon us at this moment for the best thoughts, the freest utterances, the bravest counsels, that we can command.

Let us compare our own opinions with each other independently and fearlessly, and let no man be afraid to follow his convictions wherever they may lead him. It is, I think, fellow citizens, a subject of regret that a new election of our national rulers should have come upon us precisely at this moment. We would all have gladly kept our eyes fixed upon the flag of our country as it waves and wavers upon yonder battle fields. We would all have gladly followed its gallant supporters in the conflicts in which they are engaged, with our undivided and uninterrupted sympathies. But it is not in our power to postpone the time appointed for our great political struggle. The Constitution has fixed that unalterably, and it only remains for us to discharge our duties as intelligent and responsible citizens. A great, a tremendous responsibility is indeed upon us. When the votes of the people of the United States—your votes, men of New London, and mine—shall have once decided the question of what party, upon what principles and policy, the National Government shall be administered for the next four years, they will have determined under God, the destinies of our country for unborn generations. No one in his senses can doubt that the results of the administration of the next four years will be decisive of the fate of this Republic. Within that period the Union is to be saved or lost. Within that period the Constitution is to be vindicated or finally overthrown. Within that period the old flag of our fathers is to be re-advanced in triumph over all the States of which it has ever been the emblem, or it is to be rent in twain and shorn of half its lustre, it is to droop sadly over a divided land. If the stake of the coming contest were anything less than this, we might well hesitate about entering into a political struggle and arraying ourselves against an existing Administration in the heat of civil war; but with such an issue of national life or death before us, there ought to be, there can be, no hesitation on the part of any patriotic citizen. Every one of us, young and old, is called upon by considerations from which there is no appeal, by obligations from which there can be no escape, to form a careful, dispassionate, conscientious opinion as to his own individual duty, and then to perform that duty without flinching or faltering. We may be pardoned for an honest mistake; we may be excused for an error of judgment; but we can never be excused for standing neutral and doing nothing.—

There is no exemption from this service; no man should give sleep to his eyes or slumber to his eyelids without having asked himself the question: How can I exercise the greatest of all rights, the right of suffrage, in a manner to rescue our country from the dangers by which she is encompassed?

And now, my friends, the first emotion which belongs to this occasion of assembling ourselves together, and the one to which we are all most eager to give expression, is the emotion of joy and gladness and gratitude for the signal successes of our arms, achieved recently upon land and sea. Most signal they certainly have been, and since the nomination of Gen. McClellan at Chicago, the military aspect of our affairs has been greatly improved. The gallant Sherman at Atlanta, and the daring and dashing Sheridan in the Valley of the Shenandoah, have achieved victories of vital importance to the existence of our Union; and most heartily do we unite with our fellow citizens, of all parties, and of all parts of the country, in paying a well-earned tribute of respect, admiration, and gratitude, to the commanders and soldiers by whom these glorious results have been achieved. [Applause.] We are told, indeed, my friends, that all these victories are impairing the prospects of our success and diminishing the chances of Gen. McClellan's election to the Presidency. We rejoice in them notwithstanding, and thank God for them with undivided hearts. The more of them the better, whatever the result upon the election before us. We are content to be defeated if by that we can secure the Union. I venture to say that our own noble candidate himself would rejoice as much as President Lincoln at every success of our arms, even though the consequences be to leave him without a single electoral vote. He would rather see the Constitution rescued, and the Union restored, than receive the highest honor that man can bestow. We may congratulate him and each other that his nomination has roused the Administration to new efforts. Let us rejoice that the army has been spurred on at last to redeem the failure of the civil policy of the Administration. The supporters of Gen. McClellan may well be satisfied with having given an impulse to the prosecution of the war which not only affords the best promise of military success in the future, but has already given a glorious earnest of the fulfillment of that promise. But why, my friends, why should successes upon the battle field diminish the chances of Gen. McClellan's election? What possible reason is there for such a result? Nobody supposes that the hero of Antietam would be a less careful or less skillful superintendent of our military affairs than President Lincoln or Mr. Secretary Stanton. The President himself could not have thought so when he so obviously convicted, a few weeks ago, at offering him a high command if he would decline to be a candidate for the Presidency. [Applause.] The Ro

publican party will hardly accuse the President of being willing to buy off a dangerous competitor at the risk of putting a doubtful general in the field. It is the civil policy of the Administration which imperatively demands to be changed. We believe this civil policy has prevented our military success in the past, and will prevent it in the future from effecting the great result for which we are contending, and for which only we could constitutionally have taken up arms. We believe this civil policy—if any thing the Administration have done during the past two years is entitled to be called civil—has been calculated to extinguish every spark of Union sentiment in the Southern States—that it has been calculated to drive those States finally out of the Union, instead of being adopted to draw them back to their old allegiance. ("That's so," Cheers.) We believe that this policy has tended to breathe a spirit of defiance and desperation into the breasts of every Southern man, woman and child, and has rendered the work of our brave soldiers a thousand times harder to be achieved, and has thus far given them only a barren and fruitless victory. Why, who is there wild enough to imagine that mere military triumph can accomplish that great work of union and peace that is the prayer of every patriotic heart? We may go on conquering and to conquer, month after month, year after year. We may overcome armies; we may take possession of cities; we may "make a solitude, and call it peace," but the restoration of the old Union of our fathers, with all the States in their constitutional relations to the government, and with all the stars on the folds of our country's flag; this will require something more than any mere force of arms can effect. Nobody saw this more clearly than President Lincoln himself, when he declared in his inaugural address—"Suppose you go to war; you cannot fight always, and when you cease fighting the identical questions as to terms of intercourse are again before you." The great advantage of victories is in opening the way for a conciliating and healing policy to come in and settle the question at issue; and it is at the moment when these victories are achieved that we need men at the head of the Government who can turn the triumphs of our arms to the only account for which they are worth a straw. [Applause.] It is this application of a wise, conciliatory, healing policy—which must follow close upon the track of military triumph in order to render it fruitful. Is this for which, in our judgment, the present Administration is wholly incapacitated; and for which we believe the Administration is the great and paramount necessity of the time. It is in this view that victories, instead of impairing the prospects of Gen. McClellan's election—it ought to plead trumpet-tongued in his behalf. The question prompted by every victory should be—where are the men who can turn all this conflict and carnage to account, and render a continuance of it needless? Who can originate and maintain a policy which will make that blood effective for the healing of the nation? Where is the man who can extricate his country from impending ruin, by first extricating himself from all party pledges and entanglements, and planting himself upon the simple platform of the Constitution? [Loud cheers.]

These are the questions which each succeeding victory should call upon every man to put to himself, and which can only be satisfactorily answered by a change of Administration. If any man would vote for Gen. McClellan in case our military successes had not occurred, a hundred fold more should he vote for him now. [Applause.] Without those

successes it mattered very little who was President; but with those successes the way is opened for a new President to restore union and peace to our land. Shall we have a new President and take advantage of that opening? ["Yes."] Let us look at the issue before us a little more closely and deliberately. You will not expect me to go back to the origin of the great struggle in which we are involved. You all know that a wanton and unjustifiable rebellion against our National Government was inaugurated in South Carolina nearly four years ago; that it has expanded into the most gigantic civil war that the world has ever witnessed, and that it is raging madly and wildly to-day. You all know how much blood and treasure it has already cost, and what it has already accomplished. You have followed our brave soldiers and sailors in all their reverses and in all their triumphs, from that first most impressive scene at Fort Sumter, when the Stars and Stripes were raised aloft by the gallant Anderson on the breath of solemn prayer, down to the last contest at Atlanta, Mobile, or in the Valley of the Shenandoah. You have watched the course of our national rulers at Washington—their shifting and drifting policy, as it has been strangely developed in their resolutions, and proclamations, and manifests "to whom it may concern." You know what they have promised and what they have performed; and it is for every one of you to say whether you are satisfied to re-commit the final destinies of the country to their hands; whether you are satisfied the men now in power are likely to bring this war to a safe and successful termination; whether, in a word, you are ready to take your share of the responsibility of continuing the domination through the present Presidential term, of all others, which is to decide whether there shall ever again be a President over the whole United States of America. [Applause.] For myself, as I have said elsewhere, I have reflected often, deliberately and deeply, upon this question, and I have in vain attempted to resist the conclusion that the best interests of our country, and the best hopes of restoring the union of our country, emphatically demand a change of Administration. I have not been able to resist the conclusion, that almost any other party would be more able than the Republican party, and almost any other President would be more likely than Abraham Lincoln to accomplish that great result—the earliest practicable restoration of Union, peace and constitutional liberty to our afflicted land. I have not been able to resist the conclusion, that there would be a better chance under any other Administration than the present, for speedily effecting a termination of the rebellion upon that basis of the Union as it was and the Constitution as it is, which, in my judgment, the only legitimate aim of all loyal men. [Applause.]

And let me say, in the first place, that I should have come to this conclusion without any regard to the peculiar policy which the Administration has adopted during the last two years. I should have come to it upon the same plain, common sense views which President Lincoln seems to have expressed upon a somewhat similar statement of facts. You may remember to have seen an account of an interview which certain anti-slavery men had with the President, when they desired him to substitute General Fremont for my valued friend Edward Stanley, as Provisional Governor of North Carolina. The account is given in a letter written by the Rev. Mr. Conway, dated London, July 20th, 1864, and published in the Boston Commonwealth. In that letter, President Lincoln is represented as saying, in his most characteristic style, "Gentlemen, it is generally the case that a man who begins

a work is not the best man to carry it on to a successful termination. (Laughter.) I believe it was so (he proceeded to say) in the case of Moses; wasn't it? He got the children of Israel out of Egypt, but the Lord selected some body else to bring them to their journey's end. A pioneer (continued President Lincoln) has hard work to do, and generally gets so battered and spattered that people prefer another, even though they may accept the principle." (Continued laughter.) Now, the letter of Mr. Conway gives us the application of these remarks in a manner that could hardly be mended. It quietly suggests that "Mr. Lincoln is averse to seeing the application of whatever truth there is in his theory to the one to whom it particularly applies—himself;" and Mr. Conway most pertinently adds, "Under him the war was begun; he had to deal with the disaffected; is it not possible that he has become so battered and spattered as to make it well for him to give up the leadership to some Joshua?" (Loud laughter and cheering.) It would seem, my friends, that nothing was said at this interview about the danger of sending horses in crossing a stream. (Laughter.) On the contrary, the President emphatically appealed to that memorable precedent in Holy Writ, when the children of Israel, being themselves about to cross a stream, were compelled to follow a new leader in order to get safely over. "I believe it was so (said he) in the case of Moses; wasn't it?" We all know it was so. We all know that the children of Israel could never have crossed the Jordan and entered into the promised land, had they refused to accept Joshua as their leader. And some of us are not a little afraid that the same fatal policy which attended the ascent of Moses is about to find a fresh illustration in the case of our modern Abraham. (Laughter and cheers.)

THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION A STUMBLING BLOCK IN THE WAY OF THE RESTORATION OF THE UNION.

Why, my friends, no one of us can have forgotten how much there was of mere party prejudice and personal antipathy at the outset of that outrageous assault upon the national government by the Southern States, and how deeply political antagonisms entered into the origin of this rebellion. It is said, and it is not denied, that the Southern secession leaders, long as they may have contemplated this conspiracy against the Union, could never have mustered followers enough to have emboldened them to attempt it, but for the success of the Republican party. We all know the secession leaders aided the election of President Lincoln for that purpose. He was their favorite candidate then, as we think he is now. It was the triumph of that great sectional organization, the Republican party, which was relied upon to fire the hearts of the Southern people. The cry of the South was not so much as that "We will not submit to the Constitution," as that "We will not have these men to rule over us;" "We will not submit to the dominion of the black Republicans." That was their cry.

I do not say that this conduct on the part of the Southern States was not utterly unwarrantable and worthy of all condemnation. The Republican party, to which I shall myself apply no opprobrious epithets, had prevailed fairly at the polls. The Southern States had enjoyed their full proportionate share of the National vote, and as a consequence, as well as a just and fair result. Nothing but the most direct and palpable violation of their rights would have furnished an excuse for the course they pur-

sued. Abraham Lincoln was fairly elected for four years—I rejoice that he was elected for no more than four—(Laughter)—and though some of us at the North, as well as so many at the South, were earnestly opposed to him and his party; and though not a few of us predicted the very results which have since ensued, it was the duty of us all to acquiesce in the result, and support him as long as he supported the Constitution. And I thank Heaven that the loyal States have supported him so unanimously. I thank Heaven that the people of the Northern States have upheld him so ardently. No government on earth, in any age, has ever been sustained with a more noble disregard of party prejudice and personal opinions than our own Government during the last four years. Men and money have been supplied without measure and without a murmur.—Few and far between have been the notes of discord or dissent; and where men could not be satisfied with the measures of the Administration, they have generally been content to be silent. The exceptional cases, to which so much attention has been pointed, by the needless and unjustifiable severity with which they have been treated, have only served to illustrate more strikingly the general acquiescence of the people. And as it has been in the past, so it still is. We are all of us, I need not say, ready and eager to sustain the administration in carrying on the government and vindicating its constitutional authority, to the end of their term. We are ready to raise the men, we are ready to contribute the means, for a vigorous prosecution of the war. We will help them even to another draft, if another draft be necessary. We will pay our taxes and encourage their loans. We will rejoice in all their victories by sea and by land.—They are no party triumphs. They are our victories as well as theirs. Sherman has taken Atlanta, and Sherman has almost cleared the Shenandoah. We all hope and trust and pray that Grant and Meade may soon take Richmond; (Loud cheers) and that the brave work of our soldiers and sailors may go on unimpeded till nothing remains to be effected by force of arms. They shall have the best wishes of all our hearts, and the best help of all our hands to this end.

But all this, my friends, is a different part of speech from supporting the claims of the Administration to another term of the Presidency, and a new lease of the White House.—And now that after four years of civil war, waged at such an expenditure of life and treasure as the history of the world has never before witnessed, a new election of ruler has come regularly around, is it not fit, wise, loyal and patriotic, for those who do not and cannot approve the policy of the Administration, and who have no faith in their capacity to accomplish restoration of the Union, to call upon them to withdraw from the high places of the land and make way for men against whom the Southern heart is not so hopelessly inflamed and embittered? Is it not the solemn duty of the people of the United States to ask themselves whether it is quite expedient and just to continue in place the President and party whose original election was the immediate occasion of so deplorable a rebellion?

Have not the people a right to ask—is it not their duty to ask, whether a simple change of Administration might not do something—might not do much—to remove a stumbling block in the way of the restoration of the Union, toward destroying the enmity and mitigating the ferocity of our Southern foes, and leading our Southern friends—if there are any of those still left—to open a way for the easier progress of armies and the earlier triumph of our cause.

WHAT A PATRIOT IN LINCOLN'S PLACE WOULD HAVE SAID SIX MONTHS AGO.

Fellow-citizens, I am not here to indulge in any personal imputations upon President Lincoln. Though I have never been one of his partisan supporters, I have never been one of his revilers. And let me say, in passing, that he has received harder blows from some of his own household—down from Senator Wade and Representative Winter Davis and General Fremont—than he has from his adversaries. But I cannot help remarking, that in my humble judgment he would have adopted a course worthy of all commendation, if instead of talking about swapping horses in crossing a stream, he could have been induced to say six months ago to the people of the United States, something of this sort:—“Fellow citizens, you elected me President of the United States for four years; I have done my best to vindicate my title to the trust which you conferred upon me, and I shall continue to do so until the end of my term. You of the loyal States have supported me nobly; you have given me all the men and money I have asked; you have borne and borne with me in many changes of policy and in all the assertions of arbitrary power to which I have thought it necessary to resort. I shall go on to the best of my ability to the end of my allotted term, but I am ready then to retire to the ranks. No pride of place—no love of patronage or power—shall induce me to stand in your way for a moment, in your great struggle for the Union. I do not forget how much of personal prejudice and party jealousy were arrayed against me at the outset—I am not insensible that the policy which I have recently been constrained to pursue has increased this antagonism. Select a new candidate; choose a new President against whom there will be less preconceived hostility and bias; and may God give him courage to save the Union and restore the Union. What a glorious example of patriotic self-denial and magnanimity this would have been! Who would not have envied President Lincoln the opportunity of exhibiting it. I am not sure it would not have reelected him President in spite of himself. It would certainly have gone far—very far—towards securing unanimity in the choice of a successor; and it was the only way to prevent that division of Northern sentiment which is so much deplored. (Applause.)

But President Lincoln has followed the very reverse of this magnanimous and self-denying policy. He has quite forgotten that *one term* principle to which he and I were committed as members of the old Whig party. We see him clinging eagerly and desperately to patronage and place. We see him—daring to be re-nominated—demanding to be re-elected, and claiming it almost as a test of patriotism and loyalty that we should all with one accord support him for four years more. We hear his Secretary of State comparing a vote against Abraham Lincoln to giving aid and comfort to the rebels, and even indulging in what is well called a portentious threat, that if the people shall dare to choose a new President, the government will be abdicated and left to fall to pieces of itself, between the election and the inauguration. An absurd assumption—that a support of the government must necessarily involve a support of the policy of an existing administration. This absurd and preposterous assumption, which has been put forward so arrogantly during the last year or two, is now pushed on to the monstrous length of maintaining that patriotism demands the re-election of an existing President in time of war, even though a majority of the people may have no confidence in the capacity of the incumbent, either for conducting the war or for negotiating a peace,—

(Cheers.) No changing Presidents in the hour of danger or struggle is the cry. No swapping horses in crossing a stream. Everything else may be changed or swapped. You may change commanders-in-chief in the very face of the enemy; you may remove a gallant leader, as you did General McClellan (tremendous cheering) when he has just achieved one glorious victory, and was on his way to the almost certain achievement of another (continued cheering); you may swap Secretaries of War, as you did Cameron for Stanton (laughter); you may swap Secretaries of the Treasury, as you did Chase for Fessenden; you may swap Postmaster Generals, as you have just done Blair for Dennison (continued laughter); you may change your candidates for the Vice-Presidency, “Handy-Andy,” and leave Mr. Hannibal Hamlin to shoulder his musket in a Bangor militia company. (Laughter.)—“Thus far you may go, but no further. ‘You must not teach me.’” (Laughter.) You must not change Presidents. Patriotism requires that Abraham Lincoln should stand firm in all such emergencies. And so we are all to be drummed into voting for him under a threat of the pains and penalties of treason. Indeed, my friends, this extraordinary doctrine is getting to be a little contagious about these times; and from some recent manifestations, in my own part of the country at least—however it may be here or elsewhere—I should suppose it was fast becoming a cherished dogma among office holders of all grades, both national and state, that the only true patriotism consisted in keeping them all snugly in place; and that a failure to vote for any or all of them was little better than disloyalty to the government! It is certainly very accommodating in our Presidents, and Governors, and Senators, and Representatives, thus to save the people the trouble of an election. (Laughter.) If the war could last four years more, we shall, perhaps, be spared the trouble of elections altogether. (“That’s true.”) My friends, if the people are wise, they will give some of their public servants a lesson on this subject before it is too late, and teach them that the freedom of elections is too precious a privilege to be abandoned at the dictation of those who have already enjoyed a greater length of service, as some of us think, than is altogether consistent with the public welfare and the public safety. The progress of this terrible war is leaving its mark on not a few of our most cherished privileges as freemen. An overshadowing doctrine of necessity has obliterated not a few of the old constitutional limitations and landmarks of authority. An armed prerogative has gradually lifted itself to an appalling height throughout the land. But, thank heaven, it is still in the power of the people to assert their right to a fair and free election of their rulers. (Loud cheers.) And if they shall do so successfully—whatever may be the result—no nobler spectacle will have been witnessed in this land since it first asserted its title to be called a land of liberty. (Cheers.) Let it be seen that the American people can go through a presidential election freely and fairly, even during the raging storm of civil war, and our institutions will have a glorious triumph, whatever party or whatever candidate may suffer a defeat. But on the other hand, let the approaching election be overawed, controlled, or forced by fraud, and our institutions will have sustained a disastrous defeat, whatever may be the result to parties or to candidates. (Applause.)

THE UNION ENIMICAL TO THE INTERESTS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

And here, fellow citizens, let me say—that in this eager and desperate determination of the President and his party to prolong their

official supremacy at all hazards, and even by the most unblushing exercise of all the patronage and power and influence of the government in their own behalf, I find renewed reason for fearing that they cannot safely be trusted for an early restoration of 'the Union as it was under the Constitution as it is.' No one can help seeing that it is by no means for their interest, as a party, to accomplish that result. No one can help seeing that such a restoration, under present circumstances, would give the finishing stroke to the political supremacy which they so eagerly seek to perpetuate.

They, themselves, certainly, are not blind, nor indifferent to the fact, that when the South shall return to its allegiance, their own party domination is at an end. Why, my friends, we all know how it was, even when the Republican party achieved its first and only great success, by the election of President Lincoln. We all remember that even then their sceptre would have proved a powerless and barren sceptre if there had been no secession. We all remember that if the Senators and Representatives of the Southern States had not withdrawn so rashly and wantonly from their seats, the Republican party would soon have been in a helpless minority in one, if not in both branches of Congress. They could not have carried a measure, they could not have confirmed a nomination, without the co-operation or consent of their opponents. And does anybody imagine that if the South were to lay down their arms to-morrow, and come back again into the old family fold, they would send any Senators or Representatives to Washington, whoever they might be, to sustain the measures or the men of the Republican party? No, my friends, that party itself sees plainly that no such thing is within the prospect of belief. That party sees that the restoration of Union, and peace under the old Constitution of our fathers, is thus the end and upshot of their own dynasty. How, then, can we help fearing that they will willingly, if not systematically, postpone a result which is to turn them from the enjoyment of power. The truth is that the Republican party have thriven and fattened on this rebellion, and it has brought them such an overflowing harvest of power, patronage, offices, contracts and spoils, and they have become so enamored of the vast and overshadowing influence which belongs to an existing administration at such an hour, that they are in danger of forgetting that their country is bleeding and dying on their hands. ("That's so.") Applause.

And this suggests to me, my friends, an idea to which I cannot refrain from giving a brief expression. You have not forgotten, I am sure, that most memorable period which immediately preceded the inauguration of President Lincoln, when the minds and hearts of so many good men, throughout the country were earnestly intent on devising some mode of arresting and averting that terrible struggle in which we were so soon afterward involved. You all remember that peace convention, as it was called, which assembled at Washington, in February, 1861. You all remember the high and sanguine hopes which greeted its assembly; and you have not forgotten—no patriot can ever forget—how sadly those hopes were disappointed. For one, I have never for a moment doubted that if the incoming President and his friends in Congress had given countenance and encouragement to that convention, and to the measures it proposed, the secession would have ended with South Carolina and the Gulf States, and we should have had Union and peace before six months had expired. The rebellion would have been nipped in the bud. It would have been crushed in the egg, and the wounds it had occasioned would have healed up, as the

surgeons say, *by first intention*. I could furnish the opinions of some of the best men in our country, living and dead, to that effect. And why, why was that convention so repelled and repudiated by the ultra wing of the Republican party? Why did they stand idly by mocking at every effort to prevent and avert this great and terrible struggle, and rejoicing at what they called the glorious future before them?

How can any one doubt that it was because the secession of the South, and the withdrawal of the southern representation, would secure that party pre-eminence which was essential to the carrying out of their cherished policy, as well as to the distribution of the spoils of victory. I was at Washington myself, during a portion of that period, in company with friends whom I esteem and honor to-day as I esteemed and honored them, though I find myself differing from more than one of them. We went on as the bearers of a petition of fifteen thousand citizens of Boston for the adoption of measures of conciliation and peace. It is not for me to say, even if I knew, what views were brought back by the members of that little company; but I cannot forget the painful impression which was left upon my own mind, that there was men there, and in high places too, who, instead of lifting a finger to arrest the dreadful catastrophe which was so obviously impending, were gloating and glorying over the departure of the successive Southern delegations, as furnishing a clearer field for the more successful prosecution of their own fanatical views, and for the more undisputed establishment of their own party supremacy. And can it be imagined that such men will be ready or willing to co-operate in bringing back the Southern States to their old allegiance to the Union? In bringing them back, too, be it remembered, not only with their old quota of representation, but with a much larger delegation in the House of Representatives than they have ever before enjoyed? For, my friends, if the President's proclamation is to have the full interpretation and sweeping efficacy which some of his friends claim for it, the representation of the Southern States—after the next apportionment certainly—is to be not merely on the old three-fifths principle, but on the whole black race, man for man, as well as on the whole white race. It will hardly lie in the mouth of the Republican party, most assuredly, to refuse the South a full representation on its whole black population. If the proclamation accomplished anything, it abolished the three-fifths principle of the Constitution—not, indeed, the way in which John Quincy Adams once tried to abolish it many years ago, by striking out all representation of those to whom it related; but by giving a full, complete five-fifths representation on the whole black population of the Southern States.

I repeat, then, fellow-citizens, that it is too much the interest of the Republican party, as a party, to defer and postpone the return of the Southern States to the Union, for that party to be safely trusted with the work of restoration. (Applause.) Or, indeed, does any one imagine that those States are to be brought back without any representation? Is any one proposing to bring them back only as so many desolated and subjugated provinces, to be held for generations in a state of subjection and vassalage, by enormous standing armies, and at an immeasurable cost of treasure and blood? Are we deliberately bent on having an American Hungary, or an American Poland, or an American Venice, on our continent? Do we desire to see even an American Ireland? Are all our efforts for the abolition of black slavery to end in establish-

ing a quasi-condition of white slavery? (Cheers.) Is that what we are fighting for, under the old Liberty Flag of our fathers? ("No, no.") No, no, my friends, we must have the old Constitutional Union again, if we have anything—with all the States, and with all the rights reserved to the States or to the people, as well as with all the powers secured to the general government. (Applause.) We are not fighting for a mere territorial Union. We are not fighting for a mere geographical area. We want, indeed, all the valleys, and all the mountains, and all the rivers, and all the lakes, which were once included within the rightful limits of our once happy and prosperous land; but we want the men, women and children—white, certainly, not less than black—who have dwelt within those limits. And we want them in the old political organizations, which the Constitution has recognized, under their own State governments, and with all the rights which belong to those governments. We want the Constitution of Washington, and Franklin, and Hamilton, and Madison, and Jay, without addition and without diminution. We want the glorious Union which that Constitution has secured to us in the past, and which, by the blessing of God, over-ruling the madness of men, we trust it is still destined to secure to us for the future. And Heaven forbid that the temporary interests of any party should be suffered to interfere with the earliest practicable accomplishment of this great restoration! Heaven forbid that this fratricidal war should be prolonged for a day, or an hour, or an instant, in order to perpetuate or continue any mere party ascendancy! Heaven forbid that so horrible a struggle should be suffered to degenerate into a great farce of *Rouge et Noir*—blood and negroes—with nothing better than the spoils of office for its stake. (Cheers.)

It is sometimes suggested, my friends, that the Democratic party have been too good friends with the South to be trusted in arranging this difficulty. Why that is the very reason why they should be trusted. I have often had reason to find fault with the Southern proclivities of some of the Northern Democrats; but if those proclivities can now be turned to the account of saving the Union, they may well be forgiven for more than all the mischief they have ever done in the past. And now, bear with me once more, fellow-citizens, while I urge upon you, finally, that the principles or the policy of the Republican party, as well as their interest as a party, seem to me utterly incompatible with any early restoration of Union and peace. I refer, I need hardly say, to their policy or principles in regard to domestic slavery, as developed in the speeches of some of their leading members, and in the acts and express declarations of the President himself. We all know that the administration have solemnly adopted the policy of complete emancipation as a necessary result of the rebellion and the war. We all know that, after having rallied the country for two years on the plain, direct, constitutional issue of enforcing the laws, and restoring the Union, the President suddenly changed his hand, and in the teeth of all his own declarations and arguments, put forth a solemn proclamation of universal emancipation. We all know that, at this moment, no man in the rebel States is allowed to return to his allegiance and resume his place as a loyal citizen, without swearing to support this proclamation, as well as to support the Constitution of the United States. And we all remember that recently, on the first authentic or unauthentic overtures of peace and submission, the President issued a formal manifesto, "To Whom It May Concern,"—making an

abandonment of slavery a condition precedent for even the reception of any such proposals.

THE POLICY OF "NO UNION WITH SLAVE-HOLDERS."

Meantime, Mr. Secretary Seward, for whom I have nothing but the kindest feelings, and who I honestly believe regrets such extravagances as much as any of us, has expressly admitted in his recent and most extraordinary speech at Auburn, in New York, that there are those of the Republican party, "who want guarantees for swift and universal and complete emancipation, or they do not want the nation saved." Ah, my friends, is there not too much reason for apprehending that this class of men is more numerous than even Mr. Seward imagines, and that in the next four years they will have acquired—even if they have not already acquired—a prevailing and paramount influence over the administration? (Applause.) Mark the words, "Men who want guarantees for swift, and universal, and complete emancipation, or they do not want the nation saved." And this, I suppose, is what these men would call unconditional unionism? (Laughter.) But it is what you and I, fellow citizens, should call conditional unionism; and it can hardly fail to be so stigmatized wherever it is openly encountered. Why, what have we heard of late, from gentlemen holding the highest official positions under the Republican regime in my own Commonwealth of Massachusetts? What have been the most recent utterances of the most distinguished Republicans at Faneuil Hall? I will not name names, for I have no taste for personality, but I will give the precise language. From one we have the declaration that "the appeal from sire to son should go on forever and forever, until the last acre of southern land, baptized by Massachusetts blood, should be rescued from the infidels to liberty." This, certainly, would seem very like preaching an eternal crusade against Southern slavery, without regard either to Union, peace, or the Constitution. From another equally distinguished republican, we have the even more distinct declaration, that "the Baltimore Convention and Abraham Lincoln ask something more than the Union as the condition of peace;" and that "he has announced in his letter 'To All Whom it May Concern,' that all terms of peace must begin with the abandonment of slavery." While from the same eminent source we are assured, that a vote for Abraham Lincoln is to usher in the glorious day, when the eloquence of Wendell Phillips may be enjoyed at Richmond and Charleston, as it is now enjoyed at New York and Boston." (Laughter.) I may be told, indeed, that all this is only the rant and rhapsody of fanatical rhetoricians; but I cannot so regard it. What said the resolutions adopted at this same meeting? One of them concluded by the unequivocal announcement, that "the war must go on until the pride of the (Southern) leaders is humbled, their power broken, and the civil and social structure of the South reorganized on the basis of free labor, free speech, and equal rights for all before the law."

HOW LONG MUST WAR CONTINUE TO ACCOMPLISH COMPLETE EMANCIPATION?

Well, now, my friends, there can be no misunderstanding the import of this language. It is clear, explicit, unequivocal. It does not pretend that the war is to be prosecuted for the restoration of the Union, but for something more than the restoration of the Union; and it expressly defines that something more to be "the total abandonment of slavery," and the "re-organization of the

social structure of the South on the basis of free labor, free speech, and equal rights for all before the law." These are the ends for which the war is to be prosecuted; and it is not to be permitted to cease until these ends are accomplished. From these declarations we may form, I think, a pretty distinct idea of the prospect before us if the Republican party remains in power, and make some approximate estimate of the chances of an early peace. Why, in what millennial period are all these results to be accomplished? By what process are they to be brought about? How is this total abandonment of slavery to be enforced? Are we to wait till each individual master has filed his separate bill of replevin? Are we to go on fighting till each individual State has adopted amendments to those constitutions which now prohibit any such proceeding? Or shall we recognize the power of the Confederate government, and wait for that to initiate and enforce this reorganization of the social structure of the South? Within what period, I say, this side of the Greek Kalends, can all this be accomplished? (Cheers.) Fellow citizens, there is not a man in the loyal States who would not rejoice with all his heart and soul if African slavery could be safely and legitimately brought to an end on this whole continent. The Republican party have no monopoly of the philanthropy or of the patriotism of the land, though some of them would seem to claim it. But, for one, I have never had a particle of faith that a sudden, sweeping, forcible emancipation could result in anything but mischief and misery for the black race, as well as the white. The proclamation, however, has been issued long ago, and its efficacy and its authority are to be the subjects of future experience and future adjudication. To those I willingly leave it. It was undoubtedly one of the greatest stretches of the doctrine of necessity—it was unquestionably one of the most startling exercises of the one man power, which the history of human government, free or despotic, ever witnessed. I have no disposition to question its wisdom or its authority, as a measure adopted for securing greater success to our arms, and an earlier termination of the war—though I cannot help entertaining grave doubts on both points. But the idea that it is now to be made the pretext for prolonging that war, after the original and only legitimate end for which it was undertaken shall have been accomplished; the idea that we are to go on fighting and fighting for "something more" than the Union; the idea that the war is not to be permitted to cease until the whole social structure of the South has been reorganized, is one abhorrent to every instinct of my soul, to every dictate of my judgment, to every principle which I cherish, as a statesman or as a Christian. It is a policy, and as much in the spirit of rebellion as almost anything which has been attempted by the Southern States. Why, does any one doubt for an instant, that if the Southern States were to lay down their arms to-morrow, and throw themselves unreservedly on their rights under the Constitution, that it would be the bounden duty of the government to receive their submission, and recognize their rights, subject only to such pains and penalties as might be legally enforced upon individuals duly convicted of treason? I have often hoped that this question might be brought to a practical test. I have often hoped, and still hope, that some one State, like the old State of North Carolina, or the great State of Georgia, might be induced to try the experiment of simply coming back under the old flag, without asking any ques-

tions, or seeking to exact in advance any conditions whatsoever. (Cheers.) What President, what administration, what party, shall dare to stand in the way, and tell either of these States that we have ceased to fight for the Union—that we are fighting for something more than the Union, and that she must stay out until she has reorganized her whole social structure? What President, what administration, what party, shall dare to repel and repulse such a returning sister, and tell her that she cannot be readmitted to the old family household until she has prepared herself for relishing the eloquence of Wendell Phillips, justly celebrated as that eloquence may be? Why, my friends, the proclamation of the President, as an instrument for achieving success and securing submission is one thing, but a demand for the total abandonment of slavery, and the reorganization of the whole social structure of the South, as conditions precedent for receiving and accepting submission whenever it shall be tendered, and after it has been secured, is a wholly different thing. The one, may, perhaps, be justified on a constructive plea of necessity. But there can be no plea of necessity after the submission is accomplished. If the States in rebellion, one or all, were simply to lay down their arms to-morrow, and throw themselves unconditionally on the old Constitution, and range themselves once more under the old flag, what else could we do, what else should we do, but receive them with open arms to the old Union of our fathers? Pains and penalties might be enforced on individual offenders. The law and the officers of the law would have all that matter to look after. But pains and penalties would soon be almost forgotten in the joy which would pervade the country. The return of the prodigal son would be nothing to it. We should get a nearer and clearer impression than almost ever before of the exquisite idea of the good Book—that there is more joy over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety-and-nine just men that need no repentance.

WHAT SHERMAN THINKS ABOUT IT.

Whatever the Administration or the President might say, the great majority of the people of the United States, as I believe, would adopt the tone of that noble letter of the hero of Atlanta, when he said to the mayor of that captured city: "We don't want your negroes, or your horses, or your houses, or your land, or anything you have; but we do want, and will have, a just obedience to the laws of the United States." (Cheers.) "I want peace, and believe it can only be reached through Union and war, and I will ever conduct war purely with a view to early and perfect success. But, my dear sir, when that peace does come, you must call me for anything. Then I will I share with you the last cracker, and watch with you to shield your houses and families against danger from every quarter." (Tremendous cheering.) Yes, not only would the gallant Sherman "watch with them to shield their homes and families against danger from every quarter," but that whole noble army, which has done such glorious service in the West, would watch with him, and we should witness such a fraternization, and such a jubilee, as would send a thrill of joy to the heart of every real friend of Union, and peace, and constitutional liberty in our land. (Cheers.) We should stop to ask whether we had obtained anything more than Union and peace. We should leave the judicial tribunals to ascertain that. We should remit that question to the constables and the court-houses. We should feel that in vindicating the authority of the Constitution and laws, and in restoring the Union

of our fathers, we had proposed the way for a glorious future for our country, and had accomplished the great end for which so many noble young men had shed their blood and laid down their lives. And so we should all thank God and be joyful. (Cheers.) Undoubtedly, my friends, it is the hope of us all, that, in some way or other, sooner or later, out of this abhorrent rebellion will have come the ultimate extinction of domestic slavery. Many of us believe that if the war were to cease to-morrow, and the Southern States were to come back without any condition or terms whatever, slavery would be found to have received a wound from which it could never recover. Mr. Seward himself, in that same extraordinary speech from which I have already quoted, has expressly told us that, practically, slavery is no longer in question. "I told you here, (he says,) a year ago, that, practically, slavery was no longer in question—that it was perishing under the operation of the war." That assertion," he adds, "has been confirmed. Jefferson Davis tells us in effect the same thing." And Jefferson Davis does indeed tell us very much the same thing, if the report is to be credited of his conversation with certain quasi-peace commissioners who went to Richmond under a pass furnished by General Grant at the request of President Lincoln. Jefferson Davis is stated in that report to have admitted that two millions of slaves—one-half of the whole number in the Southern States—had been practically freed already.

THE UNION THE ONE CONDITION OF PEACE.

But whatever may be our opinions on this point, it will be enough for us all—enough, certainly, for Gen. McClellan and his supporters, if we shall have succeeded in restoring the Union; and I believe the people of the loyal States will agree with him, and agree with us, that the war ought not to be prosecuted another day, another hour, another instant, for any purpose under the sun, except the simple restoration of the Union. "The Union—the Union—the one condition of peace. We ask no more." (Cheers.) That is the platform of our candidate, and that is our platform. We are not propagating philanthropy at the point of the bayonet. We are not for wading through seas of blood in order to reorganize the whole social structure of the South. Christianity forbids us; for it tells us not to do evil even that good may come. The Constitution forbids us; for, the moment the rebel is suppressed, the war becomes unconstitutional whatever may be its pretext. The condition of our country, which has already sent forth more than two millions of soldiers into the field, and which is already groaning beneath a debt of three or four thousand millions of dollars; the condition of our beloved country forbids us from sending another soldier, or spending another dollar, after the Union is saved. Fellow-citizens, a solemn oath to support "the Constitution of the United States as it is," is still upon all our rulers, and a solemn obligation to do so still rests upon the whole people. No rebellion elsewhere can justify rebellion on our part. We must pursue constitutional ends, and we must pursue them by constitutional means. Then we shall succeed, and then our success will be substantial and permanent. Oh, what a triumph it will be if the Constitution of our fathers should come out, after all, unscathed from this fiery trial; if it should be seen to have prevailed, by its own innate original force and vigor, over all the machinations and assaults of its enemies! How proudly, then, might we hold it up before all mankind, in all time to come, as we have in all time past, as indeed the master-piece of

political and civil wisdom! How confidently could we then challenge all the world to show us a system of government of equal stability and endurance. (Cheers.) It has already stood the strain of prosperity and of adversity. Foreign wars and domestic dissensions have hitherto assailed it in vain. The rains have descended, and the winds have blown, and the floods have come and beaten upon it, but it has not been shaken. The great final test is now upon it; rebellion, revolution, civil war, in their most formidable and appalling shape. Oh, if we can but carry it through this last trial unharmed! we never again need fear for its security. Let us then hold it up—the Constitution, the whole Constitution, and nothing but the Constitution—as at once the end and the instrument of all our efforts.—Let us demand a faithful adherence to all its forms and to all its principles. Let us watch jealously for the observance and fulfillment of all its provisions. And let us resolve that if it does fail and fall at last, it shall be by the madness of its enemies, and not by the supineness or willing surrender of its friends.—[Applause.]

MR. LINCOLN MAKING FUN OF HIMSELF—A REMINISCENCE.

Fellow-citizens, with such issues before us, I need say but little about candidates. You know already, I am sure, all that you care to know about President Lincoln. Yet, perhaps, I can recall a little passage in his public life which may at least amuse you. His only term of congressional service was during the period when I had the honor to preside over the House of which he was a member. He helped me to the Speaker's chair by his own vote, and I really wish I could find it in my conscience to return the compliment at this moment.—[Laughter.] But I cannot forget a certain speech which he made, in the month of July, 1848, in reference to the nomination for the presidency of a distinguished Democrat who still lives (I rejoice to remember) to enjoy the esteem and respect of all who know him.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, (said he,) did you know that I am a military hero? Yes, sir, (continued he,) in the days of the Black Hawk war, I fought, bled, and came away.—Speaking of Gen. Cass's career, reminds me of my own. I was not at Stillman's defeat, but I was about as near as Cass was to Hull's surrender; and like him I saw the place soon afterwards. It is quite certain that I did not break my sword, for I had none to break; but I bent a musket on one occasion pretty badly. If Cass broke his sword, the idea is, he broke it in desperation; I bent the musket by accident. If Gen. Cass went in advance of me in picking up whortleberries, I guess I surprised him in charges upon the wild onions. [Laughter.] If he saw any live fighting Indians, it was more than I did, but I had a good many bloody struggles with the mosquitos; and, though I never fainted from loss of blood, I can truly say I was often very hungry. Mr. Speaker, if I should ever conclude to doff whatever our Democratic friends may suppose there is of black cockade federalism about me, and thereupon they shall take me up as their candidate for the presidency, I protest the yell will not make fun of me, as they have of General Cass, by attempting to write me into a military hero. (Great laughter.)

Ah, my friends, what a blessing this for the country it would have been if President Lincoln had only "recked his own rede," if after he became President, he had not made fun of himself by attempting to play the part of a military hero. Why, it is hardly too much to say that, if he had never undertaken to direct and control the course of our armies, if he had not so rashly interfered with the move-

ments of at least one of our generals, Richmond might have been taken, and the war triumphantly terminated long before this time. You all know the General to whom I refer, and the circumstances of that interference. (Cheers.)

GENERAL McCLELLAN'S CAREER AND MERITS.

Indeed, the whole career of our noble candidate is fresh in the minds and hearts of the whole American people. You have followed the story, I doubt not, as admirably narrated by my accomplished and excellent friend, Mr. Hilliard. You have traced him through that memorable campaign in Mexico, and have not forgotten his gallantry at Contreras where, like Washington at Braddock's defeat, he had two horses shot under him, but came off substantially unharmed. (Cheers.) You have accompanied him on his visit to the scene of the Crimean war, and have not forgotten his masterly reports on the armies of Europe.—[Applause.] You have followed him in that glorious little pioneer campaign in Western Virginia, at the outbreak of the rebellion, and have not forgotten the brilliant victories by which that campaign was crowned. [Applause.] You have seen him assume the command of the whole forces of the Union, and have not forgotten with what devotion, and with what consummate skill, he organized the grand Army of the Potomac. [Applause.] You have followed him through that terrible Peninsular campaign. (Cheers.) You have accompanied him through those fearful seven days of agony and glory. (Cheers.) You have seen how cruelly he was thwarted and stripped of his troops on the right hand and on the left, and you have not forgotten how bravely he bore up under all the grievous disappointments to which he was subjected.—You have seen him assuming command again at the solicitation of the President, at an hour of the greatest peril to our Capitol and our country—reorganizing as he made the brave but broken battalions of the army of the Potomac, and achieving the glorious victory of Antietam on the very birthday of the Constitution. [Immense cheering.] And you have not failed to read his admirable dispatch from Harrison's Landing, his brilliant oration at West Point, and his noble letter accepting the nomination for the presidency. (Cheers.) No words of mine, no words of anybody could add anything to such a record. No words of his enemies can take away anything from that record. I have no disposition to exaggerate his services or his merits, much less to disparage those of others. We all know that other commanders have done nobly, and have achieved victories which have entitled them to the honor and gratitude of the whole country. It has been their fortune, however, to be left alone. Many of them, too, are still in the field, privileged still to lead the armies and fight the battles of their country, instead of being unjustly deprived of their command and inexorably doomed to inaction. There will be an opportunity for doing full justice to their deserts hereafter. But what can be more fit, than for the people of the United States now to take up their young and gallant leader whom the rulers have so wantonly rejected, and to place him where his experience and abilities may be turned to account for the rescue of his country? In the full vigor of manhood, without a stain or a shade upon his character, a man of virtuous life and christian principle, brave, prudent, patriotic, a stranger to all mere party politics, a perfect stranger to anything like political management or political intrigue, one who has known how to command a great army, and has never forgotten how to command himself, with no pledges on his lips or in his heart, except to the en-

forfeiture of the laws, the vindication of the Constitution, and the restoration of the Union. What is there wanting in him to attract the confidence and support of all loyal men, and to secure the respect and admiration even of his enemies? [Loud and continued cheering.] Let me not forget, however, to remind you, my friends, that he has in his veins—in common with so many of you, and in common, as I am glad to remember, with myself, too—a little good old Connecticut blood, coming down from an ancestor who settled here a century ago. I am sure you will not think any the worse of him for that. [Cheers.]

A BIT OF TESTIMONY FROM THE SOUTH.

I fear, my friends, that I have already detained you too long. My own strength, certainly, will hardly hold out longer, even if your indulgence and patience be not already exhausted. But I must not take my leave of you without giving you a little piece of testimony of the highest interest and importance. Among the refugees from Atlanta, immediately after its capture, there came within our lines, not many days ago, a person of the most estimable and excellent character, who had enjoyed the best opportunities of understanding the Southern heart. And what said he, do you think, on being interrogated as to the prospects of the future? I can give you his remarks from the most authentic source. They were communicated to me by a good friend of the Union in one of the border States. "If Mr. Lincoln is re-elected," said he, "the people of the South will fight for thirty years, for they feel that they can do nothing better, but if McClellan is elected, such an overwhelming Union party will be formed in the South, that peace will be the almost immediate result." ("That's so," Loud cheers.) "I speak," said he, "the sentiments of the people, not the officials. The leaders of the rebellion are anxious for the re-election of Mr. Lincoln, as giving most hope of the ultimate success of the rebel cause. But the people," he added, "respect McClellan, and believe in his honesty, capacity, and patriotism; and, being heartily tired of the war, they will be willing to trust him." (Cheers.)

Such is the latest and most authentic testimony from the very heart of the Southern Confederacy. It was communicated to me from a source entitled to the highest confidence, and it concurs, I need hardly say, with every opinion which I have been able to form for myself. I do firmly and honestly believe that, if by the aid of this good old State of Connecticut, George Brinton McClellan shall be proclaimed President of the United States of America on the 4th day of March next, as I hope and trust he may be, (cheers), another year will not have expired without witnessing the final termination of the rebellion; and that the succeeding 4th of July will find us celebrating such a jubilee as has not been seen since that day was first hailed as the birthday of American independence. (Continued cheering.) I do not forget the danger of indulging in these ninety days, or even twelve months' prophecies. ("That's so too," Laughter.) I do not forget how many memorable warnings we have had of their fallacy. I can only say, that in that hope, in that trust, in that firm and unswerving confidence, I shall give my vote to the candidate of the Democratic party; and whether that vote shall prove to have been cast with the many or with the few, with majorities or with minorities, I shall feel that I have followed the dictates of my own best judgment, of my own conscientious convictions of duty, and of my own unalterable attachment and devotion to the Constitution and the Union of my country. (Loud cheering.)

DO NOT DESPAIR OF THE REPUBLIC.

I will not undertake to calculate the chances of success. The results of the late elections seem to decide nothing, except that the great battle is still to be fought, and that a victory is still within our reach. But, whatever may be the results of the election, let us resolve never to despair of the republic. We are on the eve of one of the most memorable anniversaries in our history as a nation. Eighty-three years ago to-morrow, on the 19th of October, 1781, the soil of Virginia was the scene of a far different spectacle from that which it unhappily witnesses at this hour. The soldiers of the North and of the South,

instead of confronting each other in bloody strife, were then standing triumphantly, side by side, under the glorious lead of Washington, to receive the final surrender of the forces which had been so long arrayed against our national independence. Would to Heaven that the precious memories of that event might be once more revived in every American heart! Would to Heaven that even now the associations of that day might overpower and disarm the unnatural hostility of our adversaries, and that the soldiers of the North and South might be seen, like the soldiers in the old Roman story, rushing into each other's embrace under the old flag of our fathers! But even if such a result is to be longer, and still longer, and still longer, postponed, let us never despair that such a day of final surrender will come; a day when rebellion will be everywhere suppressed and extinguished; a day when a policy of Christian statesmanship, breathing something better than threatenings and slaughter, and based upon a juster idea than that the whole Southern people are barbarous and outlaws, shall accomplish its legitimate work of restoring Union and peace to our afflicted land—a day when, by the blessing of God, that glorious vision of Daniel Webster may again be verified for us and for our children, from Lake Superior to the Gulf of Mexico, and from ocean to ocean: "One Country, one Constitution, one destiny." (Enthusiastic cheers.)

And when that day shall come, I can desire for myself no other distinction than to be thought not unworthy of some humble share in that inscription which was engraved on the old tomb of my ancestors two centuries and a half ago—before New London, before even Boston had a name or a local habitation in the American continent—"Bent Satt Paquett"—blest are the peacemakers.

I can desire no other distinction for myself, than to be remembered among those who, in the words of our noble candidate, "would hail with unbounded joy the permanent restoration of peace on the basis of the Union under the Constitution, without the effusion of another drop of blood." (Loud and continued applause.)

THE USURPATION IN TENNESSEE!

HIGHLY IMPORTANT INTERVIEW

Between leading Tennessee Unionists and President Lincoln.

From the National Intelligencer, Washington, Oct. 17

The following is a copy of a protest which on Saturday last was submitted to the President of the United States, by JOHN LELLYETT, Esq. of Nashville, Tennessee, (one of its signers) in behalf of the loyal citizens of Tennessee, whom the Hon. Andrew Johnson, the Military Governor of that State, and the Republican candidate for the Vice Presidency, has sought to disfranchise by a proclamation issued on the 30th of September last:

To His Excellency, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States:

SIR: The undersigned, loyal citizens of the United States and of the State of Tennessee, on our own behalf, and on behalf the loyal people of our State, ask leave to submit this protest against the proclamation of His Excellency, Andrew Johnson, Military Governor, ordering an election to be held for President and Vice President, under certain regulations and restrictions therein set forth. A printed copy of said proclamation is herewith enclosed.

The Constitution of the United States provides that "each State shall appoint, in such manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors," &c. Under this provision of the Federal

Constitution, the Legislature of Tennessee, years before the present rebellion, prescribed the mode of election to be observed, which will be found to differ essentially from the mode prescribed by the Military Governor. We herewith enclose a copy of the law of Tennessee governing the holding of said election.

The Military Governor expressly assumes, by virtue of authority derived from the President, so to alter and amend the election law of Tennessee, (enacted under authority of the Constitution of the United States, as above set forth) as to make the same conform to his own edict as set forth in the proclamation aforesaid. He assumes so to modify our law as to admit persons to vote at the said election who are not entitled to vote under the law and the Constitution of Tennessee. Instance this: our Constitution and law require that each voter shall be "a citizen of the county wherein he may offer his vote for six months next preceding the day of election;" while the Governor's order only requires that he shall (with other qualifications named) be a citizen of Tennessee for six months, &c. This provision would admit to vote many persons not entitled by law.

We will, for the sake of brevity, pass over some less important points of conflict between the proclamation and the law, but will justly say that the polls shall be opened in every civil district in each

county in the State; but the proclamation provides only for their opening at one place in each county. This provision would put out of the power of many legal voters to exercise the elective franchise.

We solemnly protest against these infringements of our law, conflicting as they do with the very letter of the Federal Constitution, because they are without authority, and because they will prevent a free, fair and true expression of the will of the loyal people of Tennessee.

But we protest still more emphatically against the most unusual and impracticable test oath which it is proposed to require of all citizen voters in Tennessee.

[The oath is as follows: "I solemnly swear that I will henceforth support the Constitution of the United States, and defend it against the assaults of all enemies; that I am an active friend of the Constitution of the United States, and the enemy of the so-called Confederates States; that I ardently desire the suppression of the present rebellion against the Government of the United States, that I sincerely rejoice in the triumph of the armies and navies of the United States, and in the defeat and overthrow of the armies, navies, and of all armed combinations in the States of the so-called Confederate States; that I will cordially oppose all armistices or negotiations for peace with rebels in arms, until the Constitution of the United States, and all laws and all proclamations made in pursuance thereof, shall be established over the people of every State and Territory embraced within the national Union, and that I will heartily aid and assist the loyal people in whatever measures may

be adopted for the attainment of these ends; and further, that I take this oath freely and voluntarily and without mental reservation. So help me God."

A citizen, qualified to vote, and whose loyalty cannot be "disproved by him," is to be required to swear—first, that he "will henceforth support the Constitution of the United States, and defend it against all enemies." This obligation we are willing to accept, and think that this is not yet deemed a sufficient test of loyalty. He is required to make oath and subscribe to a mass of vain repetitions concerning his activity as a friend of the Union, the safety of its enemies—concerning his desires, his hopes, and his fears—and that he finds it in his heart to rejoice over the scenes of blood, and of wounds, of agony and death, wherever his friends are mangled, his loved ones are slain, or maimed, or mangled, and mourning are spread over the land. While all the civilized world stands aghast in contemplation of the unequalled horrors of our treason by her Military Governor, under your authority, to swear that in these things he finds reason to rejoice! As if these were still not enough, definite prolongation of our agony, and our degradation.

"That I will cordially oppose all armistices or negotiations for peace with rebels in arms until the Constitution of the United States, and all laws and proclamations made by the Executive State, shall be established over all the people of every State and Territory embraced within the National Union." (until in brief) the war shall be at an end. Now, we freely avow to your Executive, and to the world, that we earnestly desire the return of peace and good will to our now unhappy country; that we seek neither pleasure, profit, nor honor in the perpetration of war; that we should feel bound as Christians, as patriots, and as civilized men—that we are bound by the oaths we have taken—to countenance and encourage any negotiations which may be entered into by the proper authorities with the intent to restore the Union under the Constitution we have sworn to support and defend. We should be traitors to our country, and to our consciences—false, and untrue, to the cause of the oath we are now sworn to, to the primary cause of the war, and to the people of the State, to pose such negotiations. We cannot consent to swear at the ballot-box a war of extermination against our countrymen, kindred, or to prolong against our countrymen a kindred, or to prolong by our opposition for a single day, or to prolong brought to an honorable and lawful conclusion, a contest the most sanguinary and ruinous that has ever occurred mankind.

You will not have forgotten that in the month of July last you issued the following proclamation:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, Washington, July 15, 1864.
To whom it may concern:

Any proposition which embraces the restoration of peace, the integrity of the whole Union, and the abandonment of slavery, and which comes by and with an authority that control the armies now at war against the United States, will be received and considered by the Executive Government of the United States, and will be met by liberal terms as to substantial and collateral points, and the bearer of banners thereof shall have aid conduct both ways.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

This is certainly a proposition to treat with rebels in arms—with their chiefs. Are we now to understand by this proclamation of one acting under your authority, and himself a candidate for your second office, that even the above proposition is withdrawn—that you will henceforth have no negotiations upon any terms but an unrelenting war to the little death? Are we to understand that while you hold this proposition open, or yourself free to act as your judgment may dictate, we, the citizens of Tennessee, shall swear to oppose your negotiation?

In the next breath, the voter who has already been thus far qualified is required to swear that he "heartily aid and assist the loyal people in whatever measures may be adopted for the attainment of these ends." Adopted by whom? The oath does not say. We cannot tell what measures are to be adopted. We cannot comment upon the absurdity of the obligation here imposed without danger of departing from that respectful propriety of language which we desire to preserve in adoption. But this is the chief of the government, the candidate for the Vice-Presidency requires at the lips of the loyal and qualified voters of Tennessee, before these citizens shall be allowed to vote for or against you and himself at the coming election!

For these reasons, and others which will be stated, of brevity we omit, we solemnly protest against the interference of the government with the freedom of the elective franchise in Tennessee. We deny his authority and yours to alter,

amend, or annul any law of Tennessee. We demand that Tennessee be allowed to appoint her electors as expressly provided by the Federal Constitution, which you have sworn to support, protect, and defend, in the manner which the Legislature has determined, and in the manner which we respectfully demand of you, as the principal under whose authority this order has been issued, that the same shall be revoked. We ask that the Legislature be permitted to be withdrawn so far as to allow to the loyal men of Tennessee a full and free election. By the loyal men of Tennessee, we mean those who have not participated in the rebellion, or given it aid and comfort; or who may have complied with such terms of amnesty as have been offered them under your authority.

On the 10th day of December, 1863, you, as President, issued a proclamation, declaring that "full pardon is hereby granted," "with restoration of all rights of property," &c., to each of our citizens in the rebellion, directly or by implication, in the existing rebellion, with certain exceptions, "upon the condition that every such person shall take and subscribe an oath, and keep and maintain the same, and said oath inviolate." And it is further provided in the proclamation aforesaid, that in the contingency of the reorganization of a State government in Tennessee, the citizens of said State named, the persons having taken the oath referred to in the proclamation, shall be qualified by the election law of the State, shall be entitled to vote. The undersigned would state that the citizens named, have complied in good faith with the terms of amnesty proposed in your proclamation aforesaid, and are therefore, by reason of the full pardon granted them, fully entitled to exercise all other rights belonging to loyal citizens, without let or hindrance, and we respectfully appeal to you, as President of the United States, to make good your promise of another and further hindrance to their exercise of the elective franchise.

But if it be claimed upon the plea of military necessity that guards and restrictions shall be thrown around the ballot-box, and that we are still ask the withdrawal of the proclamation of the Military Governor, because the conditions thereby required for voters of the loyal men of Tennessee as a qualification for voters are not considered reasonable, and not in any sense a test of loyalty. But they pledge the citizens to possess the lawful authority to discharge their duty. The oath required is only calculated to keep legitimate voters from the polls. We suggest that no oath be required but such as is prescribed by law. Our voters will not hesitate, however, to take the usual oath of loyalty—for the country, in language of the primary clause of the oath in question. "That I will henceforth support the Constitution of the United States, and defend it against the assaults of its enemies." Denying your right to make any departure from the law in the case, we shall, however, feel no hardship in this. The Convention to which Gov. Johnson refers was a mere partisan meeting, having no authority, and not representing the loyal men of Tennessee in any sense.

The names of the signers of this protest have been placed before the people of Tennessee as candidates for Electors, who, if chosen, are expected to cast the electoral vote of Tennessee for George McClellan for President, and George H. Pendleton for Vice President. By this action, the position it becomes our province especially to appear before you in the attitude we do. We are aware that grave questions may arise, in any event, with regard to the regularity of the election of Tennessee, in consequence of the partially disfranchised condition of the State. The friends of your ticket, however, announced an electoral meeting, and the main because aware that preparations were being made for the holding of the election, leaving that matter no longer a question. Some time thereafter our electoral ticket was placed before the public, and within a few days followed the proclamation complained of. We, for ourselves and those we represent, are willing to leave all questions involving the right of Tennessee to vote in the election to the decision of competent authority.

WM. B. CAMPBELL, of Wilson county.
THOS. A. K. NELSON, of Washington county.
For the District of Large.
JAS. T. P. CARTER, of Carter county.
JOHN WILLIAMS, of Knox county.
A. BLIZARD, of McMinn county.
H. COOPER, of Bedford county.
BAILEY PEYTON, of Sumner county.
JOHN LELLYETT, of Davidson county.
EM. EYMEDIE, of Weekly county.
JOHN D. PERKINS, of Shelby county.

For the District.

After the foregoing paper had been read, a brief colloquy ensued between the President and Mr. Lellyett, as described in the following communication:

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 15, 1864.

To the Editors of the National Intelligencer.

I called upon the Executive of the day and presented and read to him the above Protest. Having concluded,

Mr. Lincoln responded: "May I inquire how long it took you and the New York politicians to concoct that paper?"

I replied: "It was concocted in Nashville, without communication with any man Tennesseeans. We, the undersigned, have been in Tennessee outside of Nashville, but not with New York politicians."

"I will answer," said Mr. Lincoln emphatically, "that I expect that the friends of George B. McClellan manage their side of this war in their own way, and I will manage my side of it in my way."

"May we ask an answer in writing?" I suggested.

"Not now. Lay those papers down here. I will give no other answer now. I may or may not write something about this hereafter. I understand that you know you intend to make a point of this. But go ahead. You have my answer."

"Your answer then, is, that you expect to let Gen. McClellan's friends manage their side of this contest in their own way, and you will manage your side of it in your way?"

"Yes."

I then thanked the President for his courtesy in giving us a hearing at all, and took my leave.

Judge Mason of this city was present at the interview, to whom I refer in regard to the correctness of this report. On stepping outside the door of the Executive Mansion I immediately wrote down the President's emphatic response and submitted it to Judge Mason and another gentleman who happened to be present, and they both pronounced it accurate.

And now I would say to the people of the United States, who are or ought to be the masters of Abraham Lincoln. The paper which I had the honor to present to the President is not the "Concoction of New York politicians," but that which might affect its merits. It is the solemn voice of a once free and proud people, protesting against their own disfranchisement, by the agent of Abraham Lincoln, in the voice of those loyal men in Tennessee who have borne the reproach of a people they still loved, supporting the President in his lawful efforts to preserve the Union. The reward of perjury is commended to our lips because it is known that we will not touch its contents. Judge us by the people of Tennessee and Abraham Lincoln.

We must not meet that our solemn and respectful appeal should be thrown aside with a contemptuous sneer. Look to it!—If you, the people of the Northern States shall sustain this act of tyranny, your own time will soon come. If the President of the United States may "manage his side of this contest" by setting aside the very letter of the Constitution and altering the elective laws of the States so as to disfranchise his opponents, liberty is already dead.

JOHN LELLYETT.

The Hon. CHARLES MASON, having accompanied Mr. Lellyett in his visit to the President, and having been present at the interview accorded to Mr. Lellyett, has been called by the latter in the following note to authenticate his report of the conversation had with the President. The reply of Mr. Mason is also appended.

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 15, 1864.

Hon. CHAS. MASON.—DEAR SIR: I submit to your inspection what I have written in reference to my interview with the President to-day, and will ask you to state if you regard the same as an accurate report.

Respectfully, JOHN LELLYETT.

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 15, 1864.

JOHN LELLYETT, ESQ.—DEAR SIR: In compliance with the request in your note of this day, I have only to say that I was present at the interview referred to. Your statement of what took place is substantially correct; and on all material points I believe it literally so.

Yours, truly, CHAS. MASON.